

THE EYE AND THE LIGHT

NO. 2109

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 13, 1889,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.”
Luke 11:33-36

IN this parable, our Lord Jesus Christ is the light. Some saw His brightness, and were even dazzled by it, as was that woman who cried, “Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.” The malicious saw not His light, but even dared to impute His miracles to the prince of darkness. Others professed to see so little light in Him that they demanded a sign from heaven. Our Lord’s constant answer was to go shining on.

He was meant to be observed, even as a lamp is intended to be seen. A lamp is not lighted to be placed in a cellar, nor to be hidden under a bushel—the lamp is lighted on purpose that all who come into the house may see the light. Even so, our Lord Jesus Christ could not be hid. In the narrow circle of the Holy Land, He shone so clearly that Gentiles came to the brightness of His rising. Yet, to make Him seen to the ends of the earth, He must be set on the lampstand.

He was lifted up by crucifixion, and soon after He was raised by resurrection—He was lifted up from earth to heaven at His ascension and in another sense He was set on high by the descent of the Holy Ghost and the widespread ministry of His servants. Our Lord was thus taken from under the bushel of the obscurity which attached to His humble origin, brought away from the dark cellar of the despised Jewish nation, and set out in the open, where Greek and Roman, Barbarian and Scythian, might rejoice in His light. It is our duty to keep His name and His truth ever before the world, waiting for the time when every eye shall see Him on the throne of His glory.

Our Lord would have all men behold the light of His Gospel, for the text says, “that they which come in may see the light.” Whosoever comes into the church, or even into the world, should be met with this lamp. For this Gospel is to be preached to every creature under heaven. The mighty deeds of His salvation were not done in a corner—they are for world-wide observation. He that has eyes to see let him see. If you do not see Jesus, it is not because He has hidden Himself in darkness, but because your eyes are blinded.

The light which streams from the face of Jesus is meant for human eyes—the tempered brightness of the Mediator’s glory suits those eyes, which are bidden to look to Him and live. Light is not for the rich, the wise, the strong, but for men as men. The doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ are not meant to be the monopoly of a few learned doctors. They are the common inheritance of those who labor and are heavy laden. As the morning breaks for all weary, watching eyes, so shines the light of the glorious Gospel for all who sit in darkness and long for the light of God.

Beloved, the great thing to be desired is that the light which is so freely given forth by the Lord Jesus may become light within our souls. There He stands, as the lamp placed upon the lampstand, conspicuous to all. But we need that the light outside in the room may become light inside, within the soul. Nothing more truly needs light than our inner man. We are, by nature, as a lantern with the candle

blown out. Whether we will believe it or not, by nature we are in thick Egyptian night. Well says the apostle, “Ye were sometimes darkness.”

Much is said about the light of conscience, but in many this is but a glimmering taper whose beams are “not light, but darkness visible.” The light of nature is dimmed by so many surroundings, and has so little oil to sustain it, that it leads no man to eternal life, unless there be added to it light from above—the light of grace, the clear shining of the Holy Spirit.

Light is absolutely essential to spiritual life. Ignorance is not the mother of devotion, but of superstition. Knowledge, grace, truth are the nurses of true faith. The light of God is needful to the life of God. We must know Christ, we must be illuminated by His Holy Spirit, we must have fellowship with the Father’s truth, or else we are dead as well as dark. Light within we must have, or the light outside will not benefit us.

Upon that subject we will speak at this time. May God grant us the light of His Spirit, for it would be idle for us to try to explain the action of light while ourselves in darkness. Shine within, O Holy Spirit, that we speak not of theory, but of actual experience!

First, we will consider *how the light enters*—“The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light.” Secondly, we shall note *how this light may be perverted*—“When thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.” In conclusion, we shall observe *how the light acts within*—“If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.”

I. First, then, consider HOW THE LIGHT ENTERS THE SOUL.

Into the body the light enters through the eye. A man without an eye might as well be without the sun, so far as light is concerned. The eye is as needed as the lamp, if a man is to see. The most brilliant light that ever has been invented, or ever can be discovered, will be of no use to the person who has no eye.

Hence it is true, “The light of the body is the eye.” It is most important to attend to that which is the eye of the inner man, for in vain does Christ Himself shine if His light cannot enter our souls. The condition of the eye of the mind is of the utmost importance—our light or our darkness will depend upon it. The eye of the soul may be viewed as the understanding, the conscience, the motive, or the heart. It would not be possible to confine it to any one of these names. I venture to call it, “the intent of the mind,” or if you will, “the aim of the heart,” the honesty of the understanding.

When God has given a man a true intent to see the light of the Gospel, He has in that honest intent furnished him with an eye for the heavenly light. If the Holy Ghost makes us truly willing to know the truth, He has cleared the mental eye. The worst of it is that men have no will to see the light of God—their foolish heart is darkened, and hence they do not understand, but altogether misrepresent the doctrine of the Lord Jesus.

The battle of grace is with man’s unwillingness to see those truths against which he is naturally at enmity. If a man wills to see the honest truth and submits himself to the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost, he will not be left in darkness. When a man does not want to see, he cannot see—when he is determined not to learn, when truth is unpalatable to him, when he designedly twists it from its meaning, then his eye is diseased and the light is hindered from its due effect.

Many things darken the eye of the soul. One of the most common is *prejudice*. The man conceives that he has light already. His father, his grandfather, his great-grandfather, and previous generations were brought up in a certain religion, and therefore it must be right. Whether the lamp gives light or not, is not the question—it is the family lamp and he will have no other. He will not inquire—he is quite sure and wants no evidence.

When the light of God comes to him, he at once repels it. He cannot be disturbed, and therefore he will not hear, nor read, nor consider the matter—he is satisfied to let things be as they are. The very

supposition that he may be wrong he regards as an insult—maliciously invented by an uncharitable mind. What is to be done with one so blinded? Are there not many such?

Sloth, too, is a great blinder of the eye—it draws down the eyelid, and shuts out the light by the spirit of slumber. The man does not care what the Gospel is, or is not. Like Pilate, he asks, “What is truth?” but he never waits for an answer. It is too much trouble to some people to think, to search the Scriptures, and to pray. They have no heart for a process so troublesome. “No,” says the worldling, “I have other fish to fry. I go my way to my farm and to my merchandise. Let graceless bigots fight about creeds and the like. It matters not one jot what a man believes.” Thus do many abide in the blackest darkness, because it is too much trouble to open the shutters and draw up the blinds. Ah me! how dark are they who prefer an indolent ease to the light of God!

The light is often shut out by *gross error*. I cannot go over the list of the favorite errors of the present hour, for that list has grown too long for one day’s reading. Speciously taught in selected phrases, cunningly supported by a dreamy science and adorned with certain great names, errors come to us nowadays as respectable forms of thought. Falsehoods of which we heard when we were children—but only heard of them as loathsome heresies, long ago decayed and thrown into the limbo of worthless and mischievous imaginations—are now refashioned, freshened up with touches of bright color, and brought out as advanced ideas.

When any of these are permitted to occupy the mind, as they so commonly do nowadays, the old Gospel is no longer seen, because the eye is inflamed by the incoming of a foreign and irritating substance. Can it be that what was true a hundred years ago, is not true now? Can it be that the Gospel, which saved souls in the days of the apostles, cannot save souls now? Is it so, that some men are wiser than God and are qualified to sit in judgment upon prophets and apostles? Surely, judicial blindness has happened to this generation—the chaff of their own folly has darkened their eyes and Christ is hid from them.

One thing darkens the eye more than any other, and that is *the love of sin*. Nine times out of ten, allowed sin is the cataract which darkens the mental eye. Men cannot see the truth, because they love falsehood. The Gospel is not seen because it is too pure for their loose lives and lewd thoughts. Christ’s holy example is too severe for the worldly. His Spirit is too pure for lovers of carnal pleasure. When people reject the doctrines of the Gospel, they also tolerate laxity of morals and give predominance to the customs of the world. How can men see, when sin has pricked the very eyeballs of the mind!

“How can you believe,” said Christ, “which receive honor one of another?” The love of worldly honor prevented the Pharisees from believing in the lowly Messiah. When sin, like a handful of mud, seals up the eye, you need not wonder that the man becomes an agnostic, a doubter, a caviler. To have a clear eye one must have a clean heart. The pure in heart shall see God, and hence the pure in heart see God’s truth, so as to appreciate it and delight in it. Oh, that the Spirit of God may wash the filth out of our eyes, that we may walk in the light, as God is in the light.

Pride, too, is a great darkener of the soul’s eye. When a man admires himself he never adores God. He that is taken up with the conceit of his own righteousness will never see the righteousness of Christ. If you believe yourself to be pure, you will never prize the blood which cleanses from all sin. If you believe yourself to be already perfect, you will not prize the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. No man cries for grace till he perceives his own need of it—if, therefore, we are puffed up with the notion that we are rich and increased in goods, we shall never see the riches of grace which are treasured up in Christ Jesus. The light of God dwells not with human self-sufficiency. A man’s own shadow is very often the means of keeping him in the dark.

Self-seeking, in every form, is a sad cause of obscuring the light of the soul. Self-seeking, in the grosser form of avarice, makes men grope in the daytime. The glitter of gold is injurious to the eye. How could Judas see the beauty of Christ when he saw such value in the thirty pieces of silver? How can a man set store by a future heaven when a present fortune is heaven enough for him? Mammon repays its worshippers with blinded eyes.

Self does the same when it appears as ambition, desire of honor and respect, or a wish to have a finger in one's own salvation. The proud desire to share the glory of our salvation with free grace prevents the entrance of the light of God. Self, in the form of magnifying the nobility of human nature, extolling the grandeur of our common humanity and all that, is a very blinding thing. How can a man that has his eye upon self have any sight for Jesus? Of all antichrists, self is the hardest to overcome.

It is written, "He must increase, but I must decrease." But if proud self will not endure a decrease, how can I see Christ increasing? There is no room for Him in my heart. Appreciation of self leads to depreciation of the Lord Jesus.

Multitudes are kept in darkness through *fear of men*. They dare not see. They feel bound to think as the fashion goes—and there is a fashion of opinions as well as of coats and bonnets. If you resolve to hold fast the faith once delivered to the saints, you will be regarded as antiquated and you will be as much pointed out for your faith, as you would be for your dress if you should walk down the street in the costume of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

To many it would be great sin to be singular. They never think for themselves. In fact, they are mentally shiftless. They ask their way of a certain person supposed to be a deeper student than themselves—of him they inquire what they ought to believe, disbelieve, praise, or blame. I remember well a man who never knew whether he liked a sermon till he had asked a certain knowing old gentleman whether it was a good one or not—he had no home-grown judgment, he imported his ideas. His brains, for safe keeping, were placed in another person's head—this is a very convenient thing and saves a good deal of headache.

But it has its drawbacks. Some persons put all their thinking out and have it done for them by the dozen—but he that would have God's light knows that it comes not to the coward who fears the frown of a mortal and makes man his god. God could have given to the crowd a common judgment and have left us to be guided by a central authority, if He had thought it right to do so. But having given to each individual an understanding, He expects us to use it, and to an honest personal use of understanding He gives the light.

The eye of the sparrow or of the ant may be very small, yet it sees the great light, if it is a single and clear eye. Pray, then, for grace, that you may search out for yourselves the truth of God, free from the fear of man which brings a snare. Let us never inquire, "Have any of the rulers believed?" Whether the rulers have or have not believed, let us follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes and rejoice in that pure light which flows from Him.

God save you, dear Friends, from having your eye injured by any of the mischiefs I have mentioned. There are legions more of these blinding things—may grace guard you from them! God give you a "single eye," by which is meant an eye which does not look at two things at a time—a mind which is free from sinister motives and from anything which would cause you to choose falsehood rather than the truth, and wrong rather than right.

God grant that we may have a desire to be right, a resolute design to know the truth as it is in Jesus, and to feel and act in sincere conformity therewith! Oh, to be sincere, simple-hearted, child-like, true! We want neither great genius nor sparkling wit, but we need an unsophisticated mind, for so the light gets entrance into the soul through the Spirit of God.

II. Secondly, let us consider HOW THE LIGHT MAY BE PERVERTED.

Some men might have light enough, but their eye is in such an evil condition that the light is turned into darkness. I suppose that in the natural world light could not actually become darkness, but in the spiritual kingdom it is certainly so—"When thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness." Hearken, my brethren, and take heed.

A man has heard the Gospel of free grace and dying love, he has heard a message full of love concerning the forgiveness of sin and pardon bought with blood, and freely given to him that believes. The doctrine of justification by faith has been clearly explained to him. He believes firmly in these great evangelical truths and calls them glorious and precious. But he draws an inference from this teaching

which is ruinous to his soul. He considers that, after all, sin is of small consequence and he may indulge in it freely, for God is merciful and grace is infinite.

At some time or other he will repent and believe in Jesus, and then he will be set right, however grossly he may have offended. God is gracious, and therefore, he may be sinful—God freely forgives, and therefore he may recklessly offend. This is to turn light into darkness. Such turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness is infamous. Words cannot set forth the hideous ingratitude of such depraved argument. We may justly say of a man who thus turns light into darkness, “his damnation is just.”

Yet no doubt there are many such who silently, in their own hearts, draw from the goodness of God a license to sin. Ah, my hearer! If your eye be in this condition, the more freely we preach to you the Gospel of the grace of God, the more surely will you go from sin to sin. This is terrible. O false hearts! What shall I do with you? You make me wish to be dumb, lest I minister to your condemnation.

In the lowest hell you are digging for yourselves a deeper hell—you use the promises of mercy as the instruments of your own destruction. What! Can you hang yourselves nowhere, but on the cross? Can you drown yourselves nowhere, but in the waters of Siloah? What has come to you, that you are so infatuated as to find your death in the Gospel which is ordained for life?

Let me set before you another form of this evil. A man perceives the great value of the means of divine grace, but he goes further and misuses them. Having been brought up religiously, he has a deep respect for the ministers of God’s house, for the services of the sanctuary, and especially for the two ordinances which Christ has established in His church—baptism and the supper of the Lord. He reverences the Sabbath, and the inspired Word, and the church and all its sacred ministries. But it may be that he proceeds from a due regard of these things to a superstitious trust in them, making of them what God has never made of them—thus his light becomes darkness.

He regards attendance upon public worship as a substitute for inward religion. He looks upon membership with a church as a certificate of salvation. He may be so foolish as to speak of baptism as an ordinance whereby he was made a member of Christ and a child of God. And of the supper of the Lord as a saving ordinance, or even as a sacrifice for the quick and dead. When instructive symbols are perverted into instruments of priest-craft, the light is turned into darkness. By multitudes, in these days, aids to faith are degraded into the machinery of superstition.

The church, which is our mother and nurse, is made into an antichrist and men look to her for salvation instead of looking wholly and alone to the Lord Jesus Christ. Outward modes of worship and instruction may be very beneficial, but if they are allowed to usurp the confidence of the soul, they may gender disease and death. When a man’s religion becomes his destruction, how sure is that destruction!

I have known many go another way—they have said, “I care very little about the shape or form of religion. A sincere spirit is everything. The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.” Such a man professes to clutch at the soul of things, but I have seen him grow indifferent in creed and licentious in life. He believes everything to have some measure of truth in it—every evil practice to have some good point about it. This is a poisonous atmosphere for any man to breathe. Hear him talk, if you would see how the worse can be made to seem the better. Nothing to him is fixed truth, nor even settled right.

He is like the chameleon, which takes its color from the changing light about it. This he calls “liberty,” but assuredly it is not the liberty wherewith Christ makes men free. Say, rather, it is the light of charity turned into the darkness of indifference. How great is this darkness! How many are deceived by it! After all, there is light and there is darkness, and they are not the same thing. There is truth, taught of God and there is a lie, which is the devil’s own, and these will never sit at the same table. There is a blessing for the preacher of the truth, but if any man preaches another Gospel, for him there is an anathema which none can reverse.

I have also seen this light turned to darkness in the case of the student who has gathered great erudition and enrolled himself among the learned. He begins to criticize. Do not condemn him for that—he judges very properly at first—he criticizes things that ought to be criticized, but he stops not there. Once having his critical faculty aroused, he is like a boy with a new knife. He must cut something or

other. Nothing comes in his way more often than the Scriptures, and he must have a cut at them. He whittles at Genesis. He makes a gash in Deuteronomy. He halves Isaiah. He takes slices out of the Gospels and cuts the epistles into slivers. You see, he has so sharp a knife that he must use it. By-and-by, from a critic he advances to an irreverent fault-finder—and from that to an utter unbeliever—hard in the mouth and stiff in the neck. His light has blinded him. He has taken his own eye to pieces that he might study its anatomy, and from now on the light will be of no more use to him than to the dead.

We have seen the light turned to darkness in a further sense. Hear and understand. There is a blessed light called the full assurance of faith—the more we have of it the better. Blessed is that man who never doubts his God, who hangs with holy confidence upon the eternal promises, and the immutable covenant, and is never staggered through unbelief. He walks in the light of God and enjoys divine fellowship.

But I have seen something very like to this holy confidence which has been before the Lord a very different matter. Assurance has been counterfeited by presumption. The man has taken for granted that he is a child of God when he is not, and he has appropriated privileges which are none of his. He has supposed himself to be in the covenant when he has neither part nor lot. And without repentance, without the new birth, and without saving faith, he has dared to boast of those sacred securities which belong only to the heirs of grace, sanctified in Christ Jesus. Dreadful is the case of the man who has presumed to hope for heaven while living an ungodly life—boasting of freedom from all fear, when, indeed, he was destitute of all hope.

I have also seen the light turned to darkness in quite another manner. Sweet and soft is the light of holy fear—it is as the twilight of the evening. It is a light that comes from God—when a man is afraid to sin—when he fears lest he should grieve the Spirit of God, when he trembles lest in anything he should err from the teaching of his heavenly Father. But then this light may be corrupted into slavish dread, despondency, and despair.

Introspection, or looking within, may degenerate into a morbid habit—under its influence, the soul may refuse to look to Christ and may enshroud itself in the gloom of remorse. Truth may be distorted till it takes a most alarming shape and the soul, in sullen despair, refuses to be comforted, refuses to believe in the Son of God.

Do you wonder that our Lord seemed to hold up His hands in astonishment as He said, “If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” If that which should lead misleads, how misled you will be! If your better part turns out to be evil, how evil must you be! See to it then, dear friends, as before the living God, that you have a clear eye and that the light of Christ comes streaming into your soul in all its glorious purity and power.

III. I close by coming to the third and most important point—How THE LIGHT ACTS WHEN IT COMES WITHIN.

If the eye be right, single and clear, there is no laborious work for that eye to do to obtain the light. When the sun is shining, if you wish for light, you simply open your eyes and you have light at once. You have not to rub the eye, or work it into some singular position—let the outward light come to the eye and at once it enters it and conveys an image to the mind.

When the eye is sound, it takes pleasure in the light and with delight conveys the image of things external to the mind within. If the Lord, in His great grace, has made your eye single, so that you desire only to know the truth and to be yourself true, then without toil you will perceive truth and the image thereof will readily appear before your mind. The light is willing enough to enter when the window of the soul allows its admission. When that light comes in, you will know it.

No man passes from his natural darkness into heavenly light without being aware that a great change has taken place. Beloved, I will try to show you how the holy light acts when it enters our nature.

When it first comes in, *it reveals* much that was before unperceived. If a room has been long shut up and kept in darkness, the light has a startling effect. You may have hurried through that room with a candle, but you never stayed to look, and therefore did not notice the state of things.

The room did not strike you as being very unpleasant, though it smelt a little stale and musty. But now that you have put back the shutters and drawn up the blind, the light has made the mold and dust very manifest. That black festoon of spiders' webs—those insects which hurry out of the light. That all-encrusting dust—these had been overlooked. The room cannot be suffered to remain in such a state. What a change is demanded! All hands are summoned to clean out the den and turn it into a healthy chamber fit to be inhabited.

The light of heaven reveals a thousand sins and causes their removal. The first effect of the light of God in the soul is painfully unpleasant—it makes you loathe yourself and almost wish that you had never been born. Things grow worse and worse to our consciousness as the light shines more and more. Beloved, we wish it to be so. We would have no part kept in the dark. We would have every idol discovered and broken, every secret chamber of imagery exposed to the sun and then destroyed.

Is it not so? Do you wish to keep the light from any part of your nature? Do you not far rather desire that the light should search you through and through and lay bare all the deceitfulness of your heart and all the falseness of your depraved mind?

As that light continues to enter, *it gradually illuminates* each faculty of the mind. The will by nature prefers the darkness—the man claims the right to act as he pleases and to give no reasons for his waywardness. When the light of God enters the soul, the Lord Jesus becomes altogether lovely, and then the sacred light falls on the proud will, and the man sees that it is evil and perverse, and he cries, “O Lord Jesus, not my will, but thine, be done.” This same light falls on the outward life which is ruled by the will, and the conduct and conversation become bright with the light of love. The judgment feels the inner illumination and decides according to the law of truth and righteousness. With the judgment, the delight is lit up also, and the heart rejoices in the law of the Lord.

The light is poured in upon the conscience and now that poor, half-blinded thing issues edicts and gives forth verdicts which are according to the oracles of God. What a difference between a natural conscience and a conscience instructed by God, and enlightened by His Word! There remains much more to be done in this direction than many of us suspect. We may be living unconsciously in evils for which our consciences have never once accused us. Godly men, in old time, persecuted those who differed from them and thought it a duty to do so—they even called toleration a crime.

The best of men owned Negro slaves and were not conscious of wrong. When Mr. Whitefield left certain Negroes to the Orphan House, he did not dream that he was violating the rights of man—in fact, he was very careful for their present and future welfare. Conscience does not tolerate slavery now. Do you not think that a great enlightenment has taken place upon the drink question? Is not similar light needed as to war, as to wage-paying, and wage-earning, and a thousand other things? It is a happy thing that we have received a light which will shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

There is nothing hid within us which this light will not manifest. And so, as one by one, we see our imperfections, we shall cry for grace to remove them, and thus we shall grow in holiness through the grace of God.

This same light, falling on the memory, awakens penitence for our faults and gratitude for God's goodness. Shining on our thoughts, it makes them sparkle with the beauty of holiness. Shining upon our emotions, it makes them flash and glow with love to God and heavenly things. A soul is a fine object when thus lit up!

The holy light falls on our motives and unveils the secret heart of all our actions. You do right, but this light shows you why you do right. You are a friend to man, but why? You are a Christian professor, but are you sincere? The light makes short work with that which did not flow from a pure motive. This light falls also on the spirit in which a deed was done, and here much is seen which some had rather not see.

Did you ever have the light of God brought to bear upon your imagination? Imagination is the playroom of the soul. Here many a man considers that he is without law. “Surely,” he says, “thought is free.” The man gloats over sins which he would fear to commit—he finds a pleasure in thinking over

lusts which his circumstances compel him to avoid. In the dark chambers of imagination, the heart commits adulteries, murders, thefts, and all manner of infamies.

When the light falls here, the man shudders as he learns that as he thinks in his heart, so he is. He trembles as he perceives that the fond imagination of sin is sin. Then is the floor of imagination purged, and the foul dust and chaff are driven into the fire. Fancy then gleams in the light of God and imagination, washed in the brazen layer, sings songs on her stringed instruments unto the God of her salvation, who has brought her out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Brethren, we need the light to shine in upon our tempers. We know some Christian people who will not let you mention their tempers—they have taken out a license to be as surly as they like, on the ground of, “it is their constitution.” “No,” they say, “I cannot help being passionate. My mother was a very quick-tempered woman and I am naturally in that way. There’s no help for it.” Let the light in upon that unseemly thing. If what you say be true, write it down in black and white that you are an incorrigible vixen, and must be so all your life.

What? Do you not like it? If it is true, let the light in upon it. Let it be known to your own self and to others that you are a mad dog and that there is no curing you. Are you angry with me for suggesting it? I am only taking you at your word. Do not say, “I cannot help having a bad temper.” Friend, you must help it. Pray God to help you to overcome it at once. For either you must kill it, or it will kill you.

You cannot carry a bad temper into heaven. They will have none of your passions in the Father’s house above. Let in the light of Christ’s love on it, and the vile thing will be made to die. It is a night bird. It cannot bear the light of grace and love. Live near to Jesus and His compassion will destroy your evil passion. Try it.

Your desires, your hopes, your fears, your aspirations, should all be set in the light—and what a joy it will be when they all glitter in it! “No part dark”—what a wonderful condition! Some professors appear to have a little light in the upper rooms. They have notions in their heads and ideas on their tongues! Alas, the first floor is dark, very dark. From their common conversation the light of God is absent. Enter at the door and you cannot see your way into the passage, or up the stairs. The light is up a loft, but not in the dwelling rooms.

Oh, for light in the region of the heart! Oh, for light upon the household talk and the business conversation! From garret to cellar may the whole houses of our humanity be lighted up! This is the true work of grace, when the whole man is brought into the light and no part is left to pine in the darkness. Then are we the children of light, when we abide in the light and have no fellowship with darkness. Then is the distinction seen between Israel and Egypt, for while all Egypt sat in a darkness which might be felt, in the land of Goshen there was light.

Where this light comes it gives *certainly*—we cease to doubt and we know whom we have believed. With this comes *direction*—we see our way and how to walk in it. We pursue a plain path and are no more in a maze. “This is the way, walk ye in it,” is sounded in our ears as the light reveals to us the narrow way which leads to life eternal.

This light, when it dwells in the heart, *brings good cheer* with it. Darkness is doleful, light brings delight. Did you never travel by a train which passed through a tunnel, but was destitute of a single lamp? Somebody has struck a match and lighted a candle, and all eyes have turned towards him. In a small way he was a benefactor—all eyes are glad of light. Oh, what a sweet thing is the light of the Holy Spirit to one that has been long in the darkness of ignorance, sorrow, and despair!

A poor boy who was put down in the coal mine to close a door after the coal wagons had passed by was forced to sit there all alone, hour after hour, in the dark. He was a gracious child. And when one said to him, “Are you not weary with sitting so long in the dark?” he said, “Yes, I do get tired, but sometimes the men give me a bit of candle, and *when I get a light I sing*.” So do we. When we get a light we sing. Glory be to God, He is our light and our salvation, and therefore we sing. O Child of God, when your eye is single and the light of God fills every part of your being, then you sing, and sing again, and feel that you can never have done with singing on earth, till you begin singing in heaven!

The text has perplexed many a learned reader, and therefore you will not wonder that I confess that it has puzzled me many times. See what it says—“If ythy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light.” Is not this saying the same thing? The Holy Spirit would not use a tautology, nor utter a trite, self-evident thing. Yet we must not go beyond what the text says. It seems to me that our Lord wished us to feel that He could say nothing better in praise of a soul in which there was no part dark than what He had said, namely, “The whole shall be full of light.”

Some have thought that He meant that being lighted within we shall be full of light to others. That is a great truth, but our Lord does not say so here. For He compares our inward light to a candle which shines on ourselves—“as when the bright shining of a candle doth give *thee* light.” He refers to our own personal comfort. When a room is thoroughly well-lighted in every corner, it has a joyous splendor. One looks about and feels content and satisfied. So, when the whole nature is filled with the light of God, we have sweetness and light to the full, and heaven seems begun below.

It is inexpressibly delightful, luxuriously blessed, to dwell in the full light of God when there is no concealment and no love of evil. When once the sun thus shines full on me, I would cry with Joshua, “Sun, stand thou still”!

This inner light will make us shine before others. It is the only shining we should seek. A clean lantern with a lighted candle in it makes no noise and yet it wins attention—the darker the night, the more it is valued. There never was a time in which true inner light was more needed than now—may the Lord impart it to each one of us and then we shall shine as lights in the world! The Lord God bring this light to you and fill you with it, and unto His name shall be the glory!

You have not to work for the light, you have only to receive it. Then shall your profiting be known unto all men when it is true profiting to your own character. God bless you, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—LUKE 11:14-44

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—911, 459, 126

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